United States
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Agriculture

Office of
Public Affairs

Selected Speeches and News Releases

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

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TRACE ELEMENTS—MAJOR PLAYERS ON THE HEALTH SCENE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 22—Trace elements—those neglected nuggets of nutrition—are proving to have far more impact on people's health than their dietary amounts would suggest, according to studies at a U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrition research center.

"Many in the nutrition community don't even think that trace elements other than iron, iodine and zinc are of much nutritional concern," said Forrest H. Nielsen, director of the Human Nutrition Research Center in Grand Forks, N.D. Research there specializes in establishing the need for various trace elements and learning what functions are impaired if people don't get enough.

"Unless you identify problems caused by deficiencies, you'll never know if an element's important," contends Nielsen in the October issue of Agricultural Research, published by USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Copper deficiency, for example may have major implications for public health, according to Nielsen and Leslie M. Klevay, a physician and research leader at the Grand Forks center.

Klevay said his review of the scientific literature has identified "more than 60 similarities between animals deficient in copper and people with heart disease." Recent center studies on copper deficiency have found that:

* It more than doubled the time it takes mice to dissolve blood clots, which can accumulate in and constrict arteries. Heart disease patients also take longer to dissolve clots when assessed by the same test that was done on the mice.

* It decreased release of a substance that prompts rats' arterial muscles to relax. This is probably how copper deficiency raises blood pressure in adult rats, said Jack T. Saari, a physiologist at the Grand Forks center.

* It appears to increase the potential for oxidative damage to tissues when combined with high intakes of fructose—which constitutes half of table sugar and nearly half of high-fructose corn sweeteners. Six men developed lower

levels of protective antioxidant enzymes from changing to diets low in copper and higher in fructose.

"We're getting all kinds of evidence that copper deficiency has pathological consequences," said Nielsen. "I think low copper intakes typical in the United States and other industrialized countries can lead to problems, particularly in older people."

Oysters, liver, cocoa, whole wheat products with bran, nuts and seeds are good sources of copper.

Research is also putting boron—a virtual unknown—"on the map" as an essential element. Earlier studies show that changing dietary levels of boron alters brain wave patterns and the way people use certain minerals important in preventing osteoporosis.

Now, boron "appears to increase the rate at which animals burn fuel and perhaps the efficiency with which it is burned," said anatomist Curtiss D. Hunt. He has found the highest concentrations of this element in apples, pears, grapes and their juices.

Trace elements may also affect how often people experience general aches and pains that don't stem from an illness or injury. In five of eight center studies, psychologist James G. Penland found that the volunteers requested medication for "nonspecific pain" two to three times more frequently when their diets were most restrictive.

Low-copper intakes prompted the extra requests in three of those studies, he said.

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EXTENSION TO FUND FOREST ECOLOGY EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR LOGGERS

WASHINGTON, October 22—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Extension Service will provide $200,000 over the next two years to fund a forest ecology education program for loggers.

"Logger Education to Advance Professionalism", or LEAP, is an effort designed to increase the logging community's knowledge and understanding of forest ecology and silviculture—the establishment, development, reproduction, and care of forest trees.

The LEAP program focuses on the impacts of logging and timber harvesting activities on the future of forest lands. It also enables participants

to improve their communication skills and sharpen their sensitivities toward the public's concerns for the environment.

"Loggers play a critical role in our Nation's forests," said Dr. Myron Johnsrud, administrator of USDA's Extension Service. "This program will allow Extension to work together with the logging community to improve the future health and productivity of forest lands."

Extension is currently funding LEAP programs in Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and North Carolina. All other State Extension Services are being invited to apply for funding in fiscal year 1993.

LEAP is a new component of Extension's forest education efforts that include on-going programs in forest worker safety, management and business practices.

"LEAP is modeled after a highly successful program developed by the University of Vermont Extension Service," said Larry Biles, extension's national program leader for forest management and cochair of LEAP. "We expect this program to be well-received in other States by environmentalists, foresters and loggers."

Thom McEvoy, extension specialist at the University of Vermont Extension Service and Ben Jackson, extension specialist at the University of Georgia will also provide leadership for this program.

The U.S. Forest Service, state foresters, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the American Pulpwood Association, the American Forest Council, the Association of Consulting Foresters and the Environmental Protection Agency will assist extension with the development and promotion of the LEAP program.

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LESQUERELLA—FROM WILD PLANT TO FARM CROP IN ONLY 12 YEARS?

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23—U.S. farmers could strike oil with a new commercial crop—lesquerella—bred from domestic wild plants, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists.

Oils from lesquerella seed can be used in resins, waxes, nylons, plastics, high-performance lubricants, corrosion inhibitors, and coatings as well as in cosmetics such as lipstick and hand soap, said David A. Dierig with USDA's

Agricultural Research Service. Plus, he said, the seed's meal makes a protein supplement for livestock.

Dierig and colleagues began breeding trials in 1985 and have nearly doubled lesquerella's seed yield—to more than 1,800 pounds an acre. "Such yields make lesquerella a profitable crop for growers," said Dierig, a plant geneticist.

Dierig said farmers in the southwest could be growing lesquerella as early as 1997. ARS and university scientists are investigating its potential in areas further north and east, he said.

"Just seven years ago, lesquerella was collected growing wild in Texas and parts of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado and Oklahoma," said Dierig, who is based at the ARS U.S. Water Conservation Laboratory, Phoenix, Ariz. Wild strains average less than 500 pounds of seed per acre, he said.

Dierig and co-researchers in Phoenix have evaluated 23 of the 70 known lesquerella species. He said the most promising species is Lesquerella fendleri, a native of southeast Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma.

Industry has been tracking the Phoenix scientists' studies. "Two firms joined our agency and the University of Arizona to grow 26 acres during the 1990-91 growing season and more than 70 acres in 1991-92," said ARS plant geneticist Anson E. Thompson.

A cosmetics firm has expressed interest in purchasing commercial quantities of oil in 1993, said, Diereg.

Farmers can grow lesquerella with conventional planting and harvesting equipment, according to ARS agricultural engineer Douglas J. Hunsaker. "Commercially available alfalfa seeders and grain combines, with minor adjustments, work fine," he said. Within the oil processing industry, equipment used for other oilseed crops also works for lesquerella, he said.

ARS chemist Francis S. Nakayama said lesquerella oil could replace castor oil in some industrial lubricants. All castor oil is imported, and two derivatives—ricinoleic and sebacic acids—are listed as strategic and critical materials by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Pressing out the seed's oil, Nakayama said, leaves a meal that could be used as a protein supplement for livestock, primarily beef cattle. The meal is 30 to 35 percent protein that has a good amino acid balance, important in animal nutrition. Feeding trials are in progress—with cattle at the University of Arizona and chickens at Kansas State University.

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MEDIA ADVISORY: NEW PUBLICATIONS ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 22—Three new publications dealing with sustainable agriculture are available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library.

"Sustainable Agriculture in Print: Current Books" and "Videocassettes in the NAL Collection Pertaining to Alternative Farming Systems" are bibliographies of books and videotapes on sustainable agriculture.

The "Calendar of Events related to Sustainable Agriculture" includes an eight-page listing of national and regional seminars and conferences on sustainable agriculture.

Copies of the publications are available, free of charge, by sending a self-addressed mailing label, with a request specifying the desired publication, to: AFSIC, Room 111, National Agricultural Library, 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, Md. 20705-2351.

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

Washington, Oct. 22—Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality), the coarse count adjustment and the user marketing certificate payment rate in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Oct. 23, through midnight Thursday, Oct. 29.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price)

exceeds the Northern Europe (NE) price. The maximum allowable adjustment isthe difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 74 percent of the 1992 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 5.80 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP	38.80 cents per pound
	1992 Base Loan Rate	52.35 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	74
II.	USNE Price	58.50 cents per pound
	NE Price	-52.70 cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	5.80 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made. This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price		
NE Price		52.70
Adjustments:		
Average U.S. spot market location	12.04	
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.55	
Average U.S. location	0.31	
Sum of Adjustments		-13.90
Calculated AWP		38.80
Further AWP Adjustment		- 0
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE		38.80 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment	
NE Price	52.70
NE Coarse Count Price	-48.82
	3.88
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	-3.95
	-0.07
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1990, 1991 and 1992 base quality loan rates of 50.27, 50.77 and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the

specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Because the AWP is below the 1992-crop loan rate, cash loan deficiency payments will be paid to eligible producers who agree to forgo obtaining a price support loan with respect to the 1992 crop. The payment rate is equal to the difference between the loan rate and the AWP. Producers are allowed to obtain a loan deficiency payment on a bale-by-bale basis.

The USNE price has exceeded the NE price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1992 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate is 4.55 cents per pound. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to September 30, 1993. Relevant data used in determining the user marketing certificate payment rate are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period	USNE Current Price	NE Current Price	USNE Minus NE	Certificate Payment Rate 1/
1	Oct. 1, 1992	58.30	54.55	3.75	2.50
2	Oct. 8, 1992	58.25	53.88	4.37	3.12
3	Oct. 15, 1992	58.20	53.25	4.95	3.70
4	Oct. 22, 1992	58.50	52.70	5.80	4.55

1/ USNE price minus NE price minus 1.25 cents.

The next announcement of the AWP, coarse count adjustment and user marketing certificate payment rate will be made on Thursday, Oct. 29.

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USDA LIBRARY SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTERPARTS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library has signed an agreement to exchange agricultural information with NAL's counterparts in nine newly emerging central European countries, according to NAL Director Joseph Howard.

The agreement is with agricultural libraries in Albania, the Czech- Slovak Federal Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia.

"The Joint Program of Cooperation was signed in Budapest, Hungary, earlier this month," Howard said. "It will benefit the entire agricultural community and ultimately the people of each participating country."

The agreement provides:

—continued and improved exchange of agricultural materials;

—exchange of personnel in order to learn about each others agricultural library systems;

—cooperation in producing electronic information systems and products; and

—increased cooperation in strengthening document delivery.

The Joint Program of Cooperation resulted from the first U.S./Central European Agricultural Library Roundtable held in Beltsville, Md., Nov. 12-20, 1991.

NAL, with the Library of Congress and the National Library of Medicine, is one of three national libraries of the UnitedStates. With over 2 million volumes, it is the largest agricultural library in the world.

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MEDIA ADVISORY

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has published a 67-page booklet, "Guide to USDA Programs for Native Americans," which provides information on USDA programs and services available to Native Americans.

The guide is intended as a reference for American Indian and Alaska Native tribal members and leaders, and teachers, government officials, and others working with members of the over 510 federally recognized tribes.

A copy of the booklet, which updates earlier USDA publications on the same subject, is available from USDA's Native American Programs office in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, telephone (202) 720-3805.

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USDA AWARDS $10.8 MILLION GRANT FOR SOUTH DADE FARM LABOR HOUSING

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today authorized a $10.8 million grant by the U. S. Department of Agriculture to provide immediate housing for seasonal farm laborers in south Dade County Florida.

Madigan said the grant will help sustain the vital economic base of south Florida's agriculture industry. Hurricane Andrew destroyed virtually all the housing that existed for farm laborers in south Dade.

According to Madigan, the grant will be matched with $8 million from local government and community groups. The money will be used to build up to 1,250 temporary houses for nearly 5,000 people who are critical to the recovery of the south Florida agriculture industry.

"Agriculture is the lifeblood of the economy in south Dade, providing about one billion dollars in economic benefits and more than 23 thousand fulltime jobs," Madigan said. "The farming industry in south Florida can provide immediate income and jobs. But without adequate shelter for workers, there would be no harvest and no jobs. That's why we have been working diligently to find the best solution to this challenge."

USDA officials have been working for several weeks to address housing needs with officials from Dade County, Homestead and Florida City, in cooperation with farm worker advocates, the local Farm Bureau, local businesses and the Salvation Army. The USDA grant money will help purchase panelized housing units and the local money will secure and construct the necessary infrastructure to support the housing sites.

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USDA TO TERMINATE MEMPHIS, TENN., AND PADUCAH, KY., MILK MARKETING ORDERS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will terminate the Memphis, Tenn., and Paducah, Ky., federal milk marketing orders Dec. 1.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the termination is at the request of Associated Milk Producers Inc. and Dairymen Inc., cooperative associations which represent a majority of the dairy farmers supplying these marketing areas.

According to the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act, the secretary of agriculture must terminate an order whenever a simple majority of the producers engaged in production of 50 percent or more of the milk for the market request termination, Haley said.

Remaining in effect are 38 other federal milk marketing orders that cover about 76 percent of all milk eligible for fluid consumption and about 71 percent of all milk marketed in the nation.

Notice of the termination will be published in the Oct. 26 Federal Register.

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USDA ANNOUNCES NATIONAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 26—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced the establishment of a four-year, $2.8 million National Scholars Program for students studying agriculture and related subjects at 17 historically black land-grant colleges and universities.

"This is the first time an executive branch department has introduced a scholarship program of this magnitude for undergraduate study. It is also the largest such scholarship program in the nation's history devoted to the study of an agriculturally-related curriculum," Madigan said.

This program is the result of an agreement reached between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and those institutions, as part of an ongoing partnership between those entities.

The program will provide at least 34 scholarships each year, to total at least 136 scholarships over a four-year period.

USDA will provide students in the program with full tuition, fees, books, a personal computer and software, employment and employee benefits for each year for four years while pursuing a bachelor's degree. Each scholarship is valued at between $15,000 and $22,000 per student per year. The institutions will provide the scholarship recipients with room and board for each year.

Receipt of this scholarship requires the student to pursue his or her education at one of the 17 historicaly black land-grant institutions.

"This is another important step in our ongoing efforts to strengthen ties between USDA and these schools," Madigan said.

To be considered, a student must score 1,000 or higher on the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), or 21 or higher on the American College Test (ACT), have a 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) or higher and demonstrate successful leadership and community service.

Students must be U.S. citizens, demonstrate good citizenship and sign a service agreement to work one year for USDA for each year of scholarship. During the scholarship period, students are part-time employees of USDA.

Final selections are made by USDA based on merit rankings of applicants by the institutions.

Madigan said the National Scholars Program requires students to study in an agriculturally related discipline. "This program will help increase the number of students studying agriculture, food and natural resource sciences while offering career opportunities to the scholars at USDA," he said.

Students must complete and submit an application by Feb. 1, 1993, to become eligible for consideration for designation as an USDA/1890 National Scholar. Applications may be obtained from scholarship coordinators at the office of the president of each of the 17 institutions listed below.

Alabama A&M University Langston University
Normal, Ala. 35762 Langston, Okla. 73050
Alcorn State University Univ. of Md. Eastern Shore
Lorman, Miss. 39096 Princess Anne, Md. 21853
University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff North Carolina A&T University
Pine Bluff, Ark. 71601 Greensboro, N.C. 27411
Delaware State College Prairie View A&M University
Dover, Del. 19901 Prairie View, Texas 77446
Florida A&M University South Carolina State College
Tallahassee, Fla. 32307 Orangeburg, S.C. 29117
Fort Valley State College Southern University
Fort Valley, Ga. 31030 Baton Rouge, La. 70892

Kentucky State University Tennessee State University
Frankfort, Ky. 40601 Nashville, Tenn. 73209
Lincoln University Tuskegee University
Jefferson, Mo. 65101 Tuskegee, Ala. 36088
Virginia State University
Petersburg, Va. 23803

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USDA TO PROVIDE AGRICULTURAL POLICY ADVISORS TO RUSSIA AND KAZAKHSTAN

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced the assignment of two U.S. Department of Agriculture officials to advise Russia and Kazakhstan on agricultural policy issues.

Craig L. Infanger will be stationed in Moscow as a policy advisor to the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and Kenneth R. Gray will be stationed in Alma Ata as a policy advisor to the Kazakhstan Ministry of Agriculture. They are being sent in response to specific requests from the host countries' agriculture ministers.

"These two advisors will assist the Russians and Kazakhstanis as they make the transition to market-oriented economies," Madigan said. "It is in the best interests of the United States as well as these new states to help them move to free-enterprise oriented systems as quickly as possible. Dr. Infanger and Dr. Gray are prepared to give them this help over the next year as part of the U.S. government's overall technical assistance effort."

Infanger is a professor and extension specialist in agricultural economics with the University of Kentucky and USDA's Cooperative Extension Service. Gray is a senior economist with USDA's Economic Research Service. They will arrive at their new posts within the next few weeks.

Other USDA technical assistance programs in Russia and Kazakhstan include a model farm community project near St. Petersburg, development of wholesale markets for agricultural commodities in Russia, the Cochran Fellowship Program and loaning of executives to agribusiness enterprises undergoing privatization.

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MADIGAN NAMES SIX REGIONAL DIRECTORS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today named the first directors for six of the seven regions of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's new Rural Development Administration.

The Rural Development Administration was established Dec. 31, 1991, as an agency of USDA to work closely with state governments and state rural development councils to develop long range economic development plans for rural areas.

RDA programs, which had been previously administered by USDA's Farmer's Home Administration, include direct and guaranteed loans for community facilities, rural businesses and industries, and water and waste systems.

Mary Ann Baron, who took over last month as RDA's first administrator (USDA news release 0788-92), said "We are happy to have these six regional directors in place. They will begin working immediately with states and local governments to assist businesses build infrastructure and, most importantly, provide jobs. They will direct and coordinate RDA's resources for maximum effectiveness and efficiency."

Mark R. Anderson was named associate administrator Oct. 6 (release 0936-92). The seventh director, for the Northeast Region, will be named soon.

The six directors and the regions they oversee are: William D. Bell, Ward, S.C., Southeast Region; Larry E. Davis, Tokepa, Kans., North Central Region; John L. Hatch, Pocatello, Idaho, Western Region; John C. Musgrave, Point Pleasant, W. Va., Mideast Region; John Pennington, Sweetwater, Texas, Southwest Region; and James L. Perry, Jackson, Miss., Delta Region.

William D. Bell, Southeast Region. Bell has been with Bell Farms since 1976 and is now part owner and manager of the 1,650-acre general farm operation. He is commissioner of the Saluda County Soil and Water Conservation District and a member of the county Tax Appeal Board. He is a former member of the permanent advisory committee to the S.C. State Development Board and former vice president of the Saluda County Farm Bureau.

Bell is a 1977 graduate of Clemson University where he earned a B.S. degree in Agricultural Mechanization and Business.

The Southeast Region is headquartered in Aiken, S.C. In addition to South Carolina, the region includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Puerto Rico.

Larry E. Davis, North Central Region. Before his appointment, Davis was vice president for field operations with U.S. Agricredit, a financial institution based in Topeka. From 1981 to 1988, he was Kansas state director for USDA's Farmers Home Administration and served briefly, in 1984, as special assistant to the FmHA administrator in Washington, D.C.

From 1969 to 1974, Davis was a bank examiner with the U.S. Treasury, based in Hays, Kans., and was a vice president at the First National Bank in Goodland, Kans., from 1974 to 1981.

The North Central Region is headquartered in St. Joseph, Mo. The 12 states in the region are Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

John L. Hatch, Western Region. Prior to his appointment, Hatch served for seven years on the staff of U.S. Senator Steve Symms (R-Idaho) as a field representative in Idaho. From 1974 to 1985, he was a field representative and director of public affairs for the Idaho Farm Bureau in Boise.

Hatch is a native westerner, born and reared in rural Idaho. He received a bachelor of science degree in animal science with a minor in agricultural economics at Utah State University in Logan.

The Western Region is headquartered in Klamath Falls, Ore. The eight states in the region are Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

John C. Musgrave, Mideast Region. Musgrave was acting associate administrator of the Rural Development Administration May - October 1992. Prior to his appointment to RDA, he had served as West Virginia state director of USDA's Farmers Home Administration since 1981. Before joining FmHA, he was mayor of Point Pleasant, W. Va., and West Virginia deputy secretary of state.

The Mideast Region is headquartered in Huntington, W. Va. In addition to West Virginia, the other states in the region are Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

John Pennington, Southwest Region. Pennington has been a State Farm insurance agent since 1985. Prior to that he was vice president of the First National Bank of Sweetwater for eight years and was an assistant cashier at the First National Bank of Midland from 1975 to 1977.

Pennington has been active in many civic organizations including service as a member of the Sweetwater school board and Chamber of Commerce. He is also president of the Nolan County American Heart Association.

A graduate of Robert E. Lee High School in Midland, he attended Midland College and is a graduate of Texas Tech School of Banking in Lubbock.

The Southwest Region is headquartered in Levelland, Tx. The states in the region are Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

James L. Perry, Delta Region. Perry had served at USDA previously as Mississippi state director of the Farmers Home Administration from 1981 to 1983.

Prior to his appointment to RDA, Perry was executive director of the Mississippi President's Council on Rural Development in Jackson, Miss. From 1987 through 1990, he served at the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington in a number of high ranking positions, including deputy assistant secretary for economic development.

From 1984 to 1987, Perry was president of his own investment company, JLP Associates, in Jackson, Miss. From 1969 to 1981, he was president and general manager of the fmily-owned Central Construction Co. in Philadelphia, Miss.

The Delta Region is headquartered in Vicksburg, Miss. The states in the region are Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

The Northeast Region is headquartered in Sayre, Pa. In addition to Pennsylvania, the other states in the region are Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island and Vermont.

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MADIGAN NAMES MEMBERS TO SOYBEAN PROMOTION BOARD

LEBANON, Pa., Oct. 26—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced 32 appointments to the United Soybean Board.

Members, who will serve 3-year terms beginning December 1992, by state or region are: Arkansas—Joe M. Kirksey; Delaware—Keith H. Carlisle; Georgia—William A. (Tony) Smith; Illinois—Alan L. Puzey and Betty A. Wiese; Indiana—Robert R. McKee; Iowa—Donald E. Latham; Kansas—Dale L. Konzem; Louisiana—Byron F. Lemoine, III; Michigan—Barry A. Mumby; Minnesota—Russell D. Roe; Mississippi—Robert W. Mashburn; Missouri—Harold F. Clark; Nebraska— Carol S. Crook; North Carolina—Margarette S. Laughinghouse; Ohio—Roy A. Loudenslager; Oklahoma—Jack Limon; Tennessee—David D. Womack Sr.; Virginia— Alvin W. Blaha; Wisconsin—Charles H. Van Bogaert; and Western Region—Stephen C. Pitts.

The Soybean Research and Promotion Order provides for an alternate member for each state or region with only one member on the board. Alternates will serve terms that coincide with the terms of members from the state or region which they will represent.

Alternate members by state or region are: Alabama—Benjamin B. Spratling Jr.; Delaware—Douglas P. Corey; Florida—Charles Stephenson; Maryland—David L. Sparks; New Jersey—Fred H. Pew; North Dakota—Kent F. Smith; Oklahoma—Robert C. Ross; Pennsylvania—James L. Musser; Texas—Royal D. Burnside, III; Eastern Region—Robert C. Junk Jr.; and Western Region— Robert D. Peach.

The 63-member board is authorized by the 1990 Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act. The board administers a program of soybean promotion and research to expand uses for soybeans and soybean products in domestic and foreign markets.

The secretary selected the appointees from soybean producers nominated by qualified state soybean boards. Other organizations representing soybean producers submitted nominations for the two regions.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service monitors operation of the board.

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GROUNDBREAKING AT NEW USDA SALINITY LAB

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—A new U.S. Salinity Laboratory will boost efforts to curb salt damage to soils, water supplies, and crops, the administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific agency said today at a groundbreaking ceremony in Riverside, Calif.

"Irrigation is one of the oldest farm practices and salt buildup is irrigated farming's oldest and most difficult problem," said R. Dean Plowman, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. "To prevent salt damage, we have to know—early on—where and why the soil's salt content is starting to rise."

"The new laboratory's state-of-the-art equipment will enable researchers to continue pioneering ways to curb salt buildup, seek salt tolerant crops, protect water quality and sustain food and fiber production for the next generation," he said. The lab will also provide solutions to problems posed by selenium and other potentially toxic trace elements and develop technologies for pesticide management.

The lab's new home—a $13.5 million, 42,000 square-foot facility—will replace the original facility built in 1937, Plowman said. Construction at the 7-1/2 acre site on the University of California's Riverside campus is scheduled to be completed in October 1994.

Private citizens, farm industry executives and university and government officials participated in the 2 p.m. groundbreaking ceremony at the site.

"Salt has damaged 30 percent of our country's irrigated land and costs more than $110 million a year in the Colorado River Basin alone," Plowman said. "Here in California, about 4.5 million of the 8.6 million irrigated acres have some salt damage. The other western states have similar problems and we're beginning to see salt buildup in other regions."

Billions of dollars in salt damage and control costs could be saved by stopping salinity before it becomes a serious problem, said James D. Rhoades, director of the ARS laboratory. But to break this cycle, he said, "we have to detect salt buildup early, determine its sources and causes, and begin efforts to stop it."

All irrigation water contains dissolved salts, he said. When crops take up water, they leave behind salts such as sodium and calcium chloride and sulfate. Over time, salt in the soil builds to levels that reduce crop yields.

"The excess salts must be leached out of soils to sustain plant growth. The leachate picks up additional salts as it moves through soil and it must be managed to protect the environment. If we can intercept and reuse those drainage waters, we conserve water while minimizing pollution," said Rhoades.

"At the new facility," he said, "we will be able to study problems of crop production on salt-affected lands, how to sustain irrigated agriculture and how to stop degradation of surface water and groundwater."

Rhoades said researchers will conduct both basic and applied research on salinity, potentially toxic trace elements, pesticide aspects of crop production, irrigation, drainage, water quality, soil conservation, plant physiology, genetics, soil and water chemistry, soil physics and solute transport and many other environmental problems.

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Brian Norris, (301) 504-6778

MEDIA ADVISORY: USDA COMPILES NATIVE AMERICAN RESOURCE GUIDE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library has produced a guide to information on Native Americans.

"Native Americans: A Resource Guide" includes a bibliography of selected writings on Native American agricultural techniques, ethnobotany, culture and socioeconomics, food and nutrition, and government relations and history.

The guide includes a directory of Native American organizations, a list of sources for general information on Native Americans and listings of colleges and universities offering strong Native American curriculums.

The guide was published under the auspices of NAL's Equal Employment Opportunity Special Emphasis Programs in observance of National American Indian Heritage Month, November 1992.

Copies of the guide are available by contacting: Special Emphasis Programs, National Agricultural Library, Room 304, 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, Md. 20705-2351.

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Randall Green today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

—long grain whole kernels, 8.88 cents per pound;
—medium grain whole kernels, 7.96 cents per pound;
—short grain whole kernels, 7.93 cents per pound;
—broken kernels, 4.44 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, loan deficiency payment rates and gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price level are:

—for long grain, $1.16 per hundredweight;
—for medium grain, $1.12 per hundredweight;
—for short grain, $1.13 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 12:00:01 A.M. EST until 12:00:00 a.m. EST Tuesday, Nov. 3. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Nov. 3 at 7 a.m. EST. The price announced at that time will be effective from 12:00:01 a.m. EST Tuesday, Nov. 3.

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MADIGAN APPOINTS MEMBERS TO NATIONAL ARBORETUM ADVISORY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today renewed the National Arboretum Advisory Council, which advises the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the arboretum's immediate and long-term goals.

When Congress established the National Arboretum in Washington in April 1927, it authorized the secretary of agriculture to create an advisory council. Madigan's action renews the council for two years.

"The council is unique because it includes representative from state agricultural experiment stations, commercial nurserymen, landscape architects and others concerned with plant life, educational programs and conservation of the environment," Madigan said.

The Arboretum is part of the Agricultural Research Service, USDA's chief science agency, and is a world-class center for research on woody landscape plants.

The 16-member council assists USDA in meeting the challenges faced by the Arboretum such as population growth, land use, public use and other factors. Also, the council explores opportunities to expand existing programs and work with other similar organizations across the country, Madigan said.

Members appointed are:

Anna Caroline Ball, president and chief executive officer of George Ball, nc., Glen Ellyn, Ill.; William Barrick, director of Ida Cason Callaway Foundation, Pine Mountain, Ga.; Francis Ching, director emeritus of Arboretum and Botanic Gardens of Los Angeles County; Paul Ecke, Jr., resident of Paul Ecke Poinsettias, Encinitas, Calif.; Thomas A. Fretz,

associate dean and director of the Iowa Agriculture and Home Economics Experiment Station in Ames.

Paul Fukawawa, sales representative for Fred C. Gloeckner & Co., Inc., Aurora, Ore.; William R. Heard, retired owner of Heard Gardens, Ltd., Des Moines, Iowa; Susan Herbert of West Simsbury, Conn., past president of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association; Richard W. Lighty, director of Mt. Cuba Center for the Study of Piedmont Flora, Greenville, Del.

Carolyn Marsh Lindsay, owner of Carolyn Lindsay Associates Landscape Construction Co., Rochester, N.Y.; Lynden B. Miller, garden designer with the Conservatory Garden, Central Park in New York; J.C. Raulston, professor at North Carolina State University, Raleigh; Elizabeth Rea of McLean, Va., national president of the Herb Society of America; Richard Schroeder, chief executive officer of Schroeder's Nursery, Inc., Grayslake, Ill.; Harold B. Tukey, Jr., director of Arboreta at the University of Washington at Seattle; and Conrad J. Weiser, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Oregon State University at Corvallis.

The council advises and makes recommendations to the secretary of agriculture concerning progress, financial needs, research and opportunities to enhance the Arboretum's program to protect and improve the environment, Madigan said. The council meets for two days each year at the Arboretum.

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U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS SET NEAR-RECORD PACE IN FISCAL 1992

LEBANON, Pa., Oct. 26—U.S. agricultural exports will set a near-record pace in fiscal 1992, bolstered by rapidly expanding foreign demand for consumer-oriented products, according to Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan.

"When all the numbers are in, U.S. agricultural exports will meet or exceed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's forecast of $41.5 billion, rising more than $4 billion from 1991 to the highest level in 11 years," Madigan said. "Export value will be second only to the $43.8-billion record set back in 1981."

"Export growth means higher incomes for farmers and rural communities in every region of the country," Madigan said. "Exports also create jobs—

jobs in farming, processing, transportation and other sectors of the U.S. economy. The $14-billion increase in U.S. agricultural exports since 1987 translates into nearly 370,000 additional jobs for U.S. farm and nonfarm workers."

The traditional bulk commodities, such as unprocessed grains and soybeans, will account for about 40 percent of the gain. The larger share, 60 percent, will reflect increased sales of U.S. high-value products, which surpassed U.S. bulk commodities in total export value for the first time ever in fiscal 1991.

World trade, Madigan noted, is increasingly dominated by high-value products, particularly consumer-oriented exports—fresh and processed foods, beverages and other items headed for grocery shelves, restaurants and other direct consumer uses. The composition of U.S. exports is shifting to reflect this trend.

"Consumer-oriented products have become the fastest growing segment of U.S. agricultural exports, more than doubling in value since fiscal 1987," Madigan said. "USDA has focused increased attention the last six years on promoting these products, and we are excited by the dramatic gains. Because many of these products have a large value-added component, they also have significant multiplier benefits for the U.S. economy."

"Total U.S. agricultural exports have now increased in five of the last six years, growing by nearly $14 billion between fiscal 1987 and 1992," Madigan said. "This strong growth demonstrates what U.S. farmers, food processors and exporters can achieve when farm policies and export programs are used properly to open new markets, counter unfair competition and accentuate U.S. competitiveness in production and processing."

The Export Enhancement Program, the export credit guarantee programs, the Market Promotion Program and other USDA programs have played a vital role in boosting U.S. exports of both bulk and high-value products since the mid-1980s, Madigan said. USDA also has agricultural officers and marketing specialists in 80 overseas locations, covering some 130 countries and providing a steady flow of market information and sales leads, as well as directly assisting U.S. agricultural exporters seeking entry into these markets.

"Today, we are targeting USDA's export efforts and resources to where they do the most good for U.S. agriculture—building new trading relationships, developing market-opening agreements and creating future export opportunities for U.S. farmers and ranchers," Madigan said. "The growth in U.S. agricultural exports in the last few years confirms that we are on the right track, but we are looking to do much better in the years ahead."

Trade data now available for the first 11 months of fiscal 1992 show U.S. wheat exports up $1.4 billion and soybean exports up more than $700 million compared with the same period of 1991.

Exports of semi-processed and other intermediate products are headed for an all-time high, led by sharp gains for soybean meal and oil and expecte records for feeds and fodders (such as corn gluten feed and alfalfa cubes), live animals (such as cattle and hogs), planting seeds and other commodities.

For consumer-oriented products, records are expected in virtually every category, including U.S. meats, dairy products, fruits, vegetables, juices, nuts, beer and wine, snack foods—even pet foods. Through the first 11 months of fiscal 1992, U.S. exports of consumer-oriented agricultural products had reached $12.3 billion, up 18 percent from the $10.5 billion in sales during the same period of 1991.

USDA projects high-value products will account for almost one-third of all agricultural shipments in fiscal 1992.

The strong pace of U.S. agricultural exports also applies to major U.S. markets. Exports for the first 11 months of the year are up 7 percent to Japan, 9 percent to Canada, 26 percent to Mexico and 69 percent to the former Soviet Union.

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USDA TO BUY UP TO ONE MILLION TONS OF CORN FOR FOREIGN DONATION

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—The government will buy about one million tons of U.S. corn worth about $100 million for donation to emerging democracies in certain Baltic states and countries of the former Soviet Union, Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced today.

"The purchase of corn—about 40 million bushels—will help support farm prices and spark a beneficial 'ripple effect' on jobs throughout the export and related industries," Madigan said.

Overseas, he said, the corn shipments will help avert a potential liquidation of livestock. It also could encourage a rebuilding of herds, and thus help ensure a future market for U.S. feed grains, he added.

Care will be taken to make sure that donations do not displace commercial sales. Donations are in addition to purchases of feed grains under the GSM-102 credit guarantee program for eligible countries.

"USDA staff have been in contact with officials in many of these countries to discuss the possibility of this program," Madigan said. "Now they will proceed immediately to negotiate agreements, after which USDA will enter the market to buy corn for the initiative."

Under the Food for Progress Program, the president can enter into agreements with governments of developing countries or emerging democracies to provide commodities to encourage agricultural reform. Commodities may be supplied from the inventories of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation or CCC may purchase commodities from the market, using either P.L. 480 Title I funds or CCC resources. Madigan said that since CCC no longer owns large inventories of corn, he is using CCC resources to purchase the corn from the market.

Recipient countries will be required to pay all ocean and inland freight costs. Additionally, CCC will take such steps as necessary and practicable to assure that 75 percent of the commodities will be shipped on U.S. flag vessels in accordance with cargo preference requirements.

"The countries destined to receive shipments of corn will be announced at a later date after Food for Progress agreements with them are made final," Madigan said.

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U.S., MEXICO JOIN FORCES TO FIGHT CHEMICAL-RESISTANT TICKS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—Cattle fever ticks in Mexico that resist chemical controls have prompted U.S. Department of Agriculture and Mexican government scientists to coordinate studies to identify and squelch the bloodsucking parasites.

Previous tick control efforts have helped create the new wave of ticks capable of resisting chemicals, according to USDA entomologist John E. George. He is research leader for tick research at the Knipling-Bushland U.S. Livestock Insects Laboratory operated by USDA's Agricultural Research Service at Kerrville, Texas.

"In the early 1980's, tick control programs began using low doses of organophosphates against Boophilus microplus, more commonly known as the southern cattle tick," said George. "As a result of their continued

exposure to these organophosphates over the years, the ticks have genetically changed to resist the chemicals."

ARS has funded new research on the resistant ticks through a cooperative agreement with Mexico's Centro de Investigaciones Disciplinarias en Parasitologia Veterinaria at Jiutepec in the Mexican state of Morelos.

"What's needed are field detection kits that let cattle ranchers know immediately if ticks are resistant to organophosphates," said George. "Our objective is to develop such kits in the next four years.

"Developing a means of identifying resistance in individual ticks won't solve the problem of resistance," he continued. "But it is the first step toward development of a resistance management technology, and finally transferring that technology to producers.

The method now used to detect chemical resistance is laborious and time-consuming, George said. By the time resistant ticks are identified, they have become well-established in the tick population.

ARS geneticist Larry R. Hilburn and L. Carmen Soileau, a post-doctoral scientist at Kerrville, will isolate, clone and characterize all parts of tick genes that play a role in chemical resistance.

Hilburn will compare the structures of these genes between resistant and susceptible ticks and use the differences to produce a DNA probe for identifying resistance in individual ticks. The mechanism of resistance will be identified by Don L. Bull, research leader for veterinary entomology research at ARS' Food Animal Protection Research Laboratory in College Station, Texas.

"Once developed, the DNA probe technology can be shared with Mexico and put into practice," said George. "By helping Mexican livestock producers, we'll be protecting U.S. cattle."

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service closely monitors shipment of cattle from Mexico. A million head of Mexican cattle per year have been imported to the United States in recent years, all inspected and dipped in an organophosphate called coumaphos before officially entering this country.

George said coumaphos and another organophosphate, phosmet, are the only chemicals now approved for use in dipping vats at the U.S.-Mexico quarantine zone, a 700-mile strip of land along the Rio Grande River from Brownsville to Del Rio, Texas.

"Ticks that are resistant to these two chemicals could seriously jeopardize the effectiveness of our quarantine zone," said George.

Since 1960, outbreaks of cattle fever ticks have been confined to Texas where they occur annually within the quarantine zone, and occasionally on

ranches north of the zone, he said. These remain a threat, George said.

Ticks in Mexico increase the risk of infestation in the U.S., he said. If the ticks became established in the United States, they could cost the cattle industry hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

In their heyday, cattle fever ticks nearly ruined the U.S. cattle industry. In the 1800's, Texas cattle ranchers driving their herds to northern markets spread babesia-infected ticks to cattle herds in the north.

As a result, many northern cattle died from the disease transmitted by the bite of this tick. Northern markets were then closed to southern cattle ranchers. George said the disease does not affect humans because the tick does not bite them.

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$120 MILLION CIVIL SUIT FILED IN FOOD STAMP FRAUD CASE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced the largest civil lawsuit ever brought against a grocer since the Food Stamp Program was established in 1964.

USDA's Inspector General Leon Snead said the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York has filed a lawsuit against a Brooklyn wholesaler claiming the wholesaler fraudulently redeemed more than $40 million worth of food stamps.

The suit seeks treble damages and civil penalties totaling more than $120 million and asks that all monies and properties traceable to the defendant be seized and forfeited to the government.

The complaint was filed in U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, New York and named Felix A. Puello, 47; Puello Meats and Provisions Company, Inc.; Pueblo Meat Market, Inc.; and two affiliated companies, all owned and/or controlled by Puello, as defendants. The complaint also lists several businesses, bank accounts, safe deposit boxes, vehicles, and some real estate that are to be subject to forfeiture.

Under the False Claims Act, the United States is entitled to three times the actual damages to the government, a penalty of $5,000 to $10,000 for each false claim, and reimbursement for its costs in discovering and prosecuting the false claims case.

The complaint alleged that from May 1990, through March 1992, Puello filed at least 540 food stamp redemption certificates with the government claiming reimbursement of more than $40 million in program benefits. The complaint charged that Puello falsely certified that all of the food stamps had been accepted in accordance with applicable federal regulations.

Snead said that Puello's wholesale firm had been authorized to participate in the Food Stamp Program until 1982 when the authorizations for most wholesale firms, including Puello's, were withdrawn to reduce food stamp fraud. Prior to 1982, USDA's Office of Inspector General had disclosed wholesaler/retailer abuses involving large quantities of food stamps purchased at a discount of their face value.

Since authorized wholesalers were permitted to accept food stamps from authorized retailers, that allowed corrupt retailers to launder food stamps by disguising the true source of the food stamps and concealing the volume of food stamps they redeemed.

Food stamps may only be used by eligible recipients to purchase food items at stores authorized to participate in the Food Stamp Program. It is illegal for retail grocers to exchange food stamps between themselves or to exchange food stamps for cash or non-food items. In April 1990, Puello's Pueblo Meat Market was allowed to participate in the Food Stamp Program as an authorized retail store.

Snead said information was received by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service that Puello was accepting food stamps from retailers at his unauthorized wholesale meat store and then funneling them through his authorized retail meat store. In March 1992, a search warrant was served at the wholesale meat store by OIG special agents which yielded more evidence of the laundering scheme.

The case is being handled by U.S. Attorney Andrew J. Maloney and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Beth Wilkinson and Gary R. Brown. Snead said that U.S. marshals assisted by OIG agents had served the civil forfeiture notices. Snead added that there was a related criminal investigation by his office that has not been completed.

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USDA PROPOSES REFRIGERATION AND LABELING REQUIREMENTS FOR SHELL EGGS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—The U.S. Department of Agriclture is proposing temperature and labeling requirements for shell eggs.

The new regulations would require that shell eggs be stored at 45° F (7.2° C) or below after packing and that they be transported in refrigerated trucks at 45° F or below.

The proposed regulations also contain egg carton labeling requirements that would advise consumers of the need to refrigerate eggs until they are prepared for consumption.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said, "The regulation will help prevent the mishandling of eggs by minimizing the potential for 'temperature abuse' and will remind users that eggs must be refrigerated like other raw animal foods."

The egg industry recommended amendments to the Egg Products Inspection Act for establishing shell egg storage and transportation requirements. Refrigeration is an important factor in reducing outbreaks of human salmonellosis. These amendments were enacted on Dec. 13, 1991, and this USDA proposal would implement them.

Under the amended act, USDA also would be able to resolve violations without resorting to formal administrative proceedings.

The proposed amendments will become effective 12 months after the secretary of agriculture announces the final implementing regulations. Notice of this proposal will appear in today's Federal Register. Written comments may be sent in duplicate, postmarked by Dec. 28, to Janice L. Lockard, Chief, Standardization Branch, Poultry Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, Rm. 3944-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C., 20090-6456.

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USDA REQUESTS COMMENTS ON 1993 EXTRA LONG STAPLE (ELS) COTTON PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation today requested comments on the 1993 Extra Long Staple Cotton Acreage Reduction Program (ARP).

John Stevenson, acting CCC executive vice president, said comments are requested on whether the extra long staple cotton ARP percentage for 1993 should be 15, 20 or 25 percent, or some other precentage. The following table shows the estimated impacts of the three options:

Item	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
ARP (%)	15	20	25
Participation (%)	68	67	66
Planted Acres (1,000)	243	238	233
Production (1,000 bales)	467	457	448
Domestic Use (1,000 bales)	75	75	75
Exports (1,000 bales)	375	372	369
Ending Stocks (1,000 bales)	180	173	167
Deficiency Payments ($1,000)	7,458	6,526	5,656

Stevenson said comments must be submitted by Nov. 16 to Deputy Administrator, Policy Analysis, USDA/ASCS, P.O. Box 2415, Room 2090-S, Washington, D.C. 20014-2415.

All comments will be available for public inspection in Room 3758-S of USDA's South Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., during regular business hours. A regulatory impact analysis on the 1993 ELS cotton program may be obtained from the Fibers and Rice Analysis Division, USDA/ASCS, Room 3754-S, P.O. Box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20013-2415; telephone (202) 720-9222.

Further details will appear in the Oct. 28 Federal Register.

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C'EST MAGNIFIQUE — U.S. FIRMS STAR IN PARIS FOOD SHOW

PARIS, Oct. 27—Buyers from France and more than 125 other countries got a chance to try everything from Pennsylvania snails to seafood when the SIAL '92 international food exhibit opened here Sunday. Eighty-four U.S. exhibitors representing 145 companies are participating in the world's largest food show to be held this year. U.S. participation is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

"When French buyers think of U.S. foods, too often the only thing that comes to mind is burgers and fries," said Suzanne Hale, director of FAS' AgExport Services Division. "But today, we met the French on their own turf with a variety of high-quality foods. In addition to snails and seafood, they include juices, ice creams and frozen yogurt."

Hale said France's high per capita 1991 income of $17,000 means the French have both the ability and the desire to buy high-quality foods. In 1991, France purchased $572 million worth of U.S. agricultural products, up nearly 22 percent from a year earlier.

"This is an opportune time to showcase the healthful aspects of U.S. foods," said Hale. "The French are drinking more fruit juices. Health concerns have led to a surge in fresh and processed health food lines. The increasing number of women working outside the home has increased demand for quick-to-prepare foods. In addition, the French are starting to eat breakfast American-style and to snack on health foods."

"The SIAL exhibit is ideally suited for small- and medium-sized companies to explore the export market with a low-cost marketing investment," said Hale. "It is also a successful vehicle for large U.S. companies who want to expand their export sales."

With the approach of EC unification, the French market will become even more internationalized, Hale said. Unified rules and regulations in the areas of food safety, labeling, additives and phytosanitary standards will be applied to imported food and agricultural products. This will provide new-to-market opportunities and allow U.S. exporters already in other European markets to expand their activities into France.

Other changes in France that signal opportunities for U.S. exporters include the fact that current French food consumption trends mimic, to a great extent, U.S. trends. Among the younger generation, there is a growing tendency to buy U.S. goods and imitate U.S. lifestyles.

The exhibit will run through Oct. 29 at the new Paris-Nord Villepinte Exhibition Center.

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FORT PIERCE, Fla., SITE SELECTED FOR NEW HORTICULTURAL RESEARCH LABORATORY

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced that Fort Pierce, Fla., has been selected as the site for relocating the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Horticultural Research Laboratory, now housed at Orlando.

"This new location will permit USDA's Agricultural Research Service to better serve the research needs of the growing horticultural industries throughout Florida and the southeast," Madigan said. This includes research on land and water management systems to protect the environment, biological controls of insect and plant pests, improved production systems for citrus, vegetable, nursery and ornamental crops, and more efficient marketing systems for all horticultural crops headed for domestic and expanding export markets.

ARS' current Horticultural Research Station was built in Orlando in 1952, Madigan explained. Since then, it has become surrounded by urban development, prompting Orlando city officials five years ago to request that it be relocated to provide land for a new cultural center.

The new laboratory will be built on 150-180 acres of land to be leased from the University of Florida, approximately one mile from its Ft. Pierce Agricultural Research and Education Center. This location is close to the Indian River citrus production area, and near to expanding vegetable, nursery and ornamental crop areas. Being relatively close to the Atlantic Ocean, it is reasonably well protected from cold and freeze damage.

Madigan said that preliminary planning funds are contained in USDA's fiscal 1993 budget. Additional planning and construction funds will be requested in future years, he said. Completion of the relocation from Orlando to the new Ft. Pierce site is not expected before 1997-1998.

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USDA OFFERS PILOT PROGRAM FOR OPTIONS CONTRACTS FOR 1993

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28—The Options Pilot Program, a program to provide federal support for commodities by purchasing options contracts, will be offered for 1993 crops, Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan announced today.

Corn producers in three counties each in Illinois, Indiana and Iowa, and wheat and soybean producers in the same three Illinois counties will be eligible to participate.

"This program is being offered as an introduction for producers to use options contracts for income and price support," Madigan said. "Farmers will achieve protection equivalent to the target price and price support levels for commodities they produce, and use the market system to do it," Madigan said.

The Illinois counties are Champaign, Logan and Shelby; in Indiana, Carroll, Clinton and Tippecanoe; and in Iowa, Boone, Grundy and Hardin.

Producers may participate in the pilot program at levels that are alternatives to either (1) deficiency payments, or (2) or loan program protection.

In addition to a subsidy to cover the option premium, participants will receive a payment of 15 cents per bushel to encourage participation and cover transaction fees and other costs of the deficiency payment alternative and 5 cents per bushel for the loan alternative.

Participants may enroll up to 50,000 bushels of corn and up to 15,000 bushels each of wheat and soybeans in the pilot program. Enrollment will be at the same time as signup for the 1993 Acreage Reduction Program, which will be announced later.

USDA's Extension Service will hold sessions in the selected counties to explain the pilot program to interested farmers.

The Options Pilot Program was authorized by the 1990 farm bill.

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SCIENTISTS IDENTIFY SINGLE GENE THAT MAY KEEP PEACH TREES FROM FREEZING

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28—A single gene that appears to help peach trees defend themselves against damaging freezes has been discovered by U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists and collaborators.

The scientists named the gene "EVG" for evergreen because they found it in evergreen peach trees in Mexico. The evergreen doesn't experience dormancy, the time when deciduous trees lose their leaves, stop growing and have a genetic defense against cold weather damage.

"As a first step toward breeding peach trees less vulnerable to early fall or late spring freezes, we crossed the evergreen peach with a deciduous peach," said Ralph Scorza, a horticulturist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

"We now have second generation hybrid trees growing in Georgia and West Virginia to test their dormancy requirements and cold hardiness," he said. A tree is most cold hardy when in the dormant stage.

"As our research progresses, other genes important to cold hardiness may be identified," Scorza said. If so, plant breeders could genetically modify plants to produce fruit tree varieties that may better withstand cold temperatures, he said.

Scorza and plant physiologist Michael Wisniewski, who are at the ARS Appalachian Fruit Tree Research Laboratory in Kearneysville, W.Va., detailed their findings in the October issue of "Agricultural Research" magazine. They have been studying cold tolerance of fruit for several years.

Growing in test orchards since 1986, the hybrids look somewhat like a deciduous peach tree and—because of long, droopy shoots—a weeping willow, with leaves that stay on year round. Peaches harvested from the trees have a white flesh and very little red color in the skin.

Scorza explained that deciduous trees, like peaches, require a certain amount of chilling to produce flowers and then fruit. They build cold tolerance as winter approaches.

But even though fruit trees prepare themselves for seasonal temperature changes, he said, a sudden freeze or harsh winter can damage and kill trees, causing economic disaster for fruit growers.

Collaborators on the evergreen peach research include W.R. Okie, ARS, Byron, Ga.; J. Rodriguez-A, Colegio de Post-Graduados, Chapingo, Mexico; and W.B. Sherman, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla.

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USDA INCREASES FEES FOR FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GRADING SERVICES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is raising fees charged for fresh fruit and vegetable grading and certification services at terminal markets.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the fee increase is necessary to offset an increase in personnel costs and to rebuild the program's operating reserve.

"The fee increase also will cover the costs of additional graders USDA hired to meet industry's need for faster response to unscheduled requests for inspection services," Haley said.

Fee increases for inspections of one to four products from the same trailer or railcar are as follows:

— from $62 to $68 for quality and condition inspections for more than a half carlot equivalent of each product;

— from $52 to $57 for quality and condition inspections for a half carlot equivalent or less of each product;

— from $52 to $57 for condition inspections for more than a half carlot equivalent of each product;

— from $47 to $52 for condition inspections for a half carlot equivalent or less of each product.

Fees for inspections of five or more products unloaded directly from the same trailer or railcar increase from $220 to $242 for the first five products, and from $10 to $11 for each additional product.

The fee to list an additional lot of a product on an inspection certificate increases from $10 to $11.

The minimum charge for dock-side inspections of individual products unloaded from the same ship increases from $62 to $68.

The fee for inspections performed for other purposes increase from $31 to $34 an hour during the grader's regular hours, and from $46.50 to $51 during premium or holiday hours.

USDA's fresh fruit and vegetable grading service provides official inspection, grading and certification to large-scale buyers of fresh fruits, vegetables and products such as raw nuts, Christmas trees and flowers. By law, these services are provided to users on a fee basis. The fees must approximate service costs. Use of these services is voluntary on industry's part.

The final rule will be published in the Oct. 29 Federal Register, with increases effective Nov. 12. Copies and further information may be obtained from the Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division AMS, USDA, Room 2056-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; tel. (202) 720-5870.

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CONTRACTOR INDICTED FOR VIOLATING FEDERAL ANTI-KICKBACK LAWS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28—U.S. Department of Agriculture Inspector General Leon Snead announced today that a Federal grand jury in the Eastern District of Missouri returned an indictment late yesterday agains the president of a printing company for violating Federal anti-kickback laws and for including the kickback payments in the contract price charged to USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

Charged in the two count indictment was James R. Lippert, 54; Town and County, Missouri, president of C.B. Forms L.P.; East Prairie, Missouri.

The indictment charges that from October 1988 to May 1992, Lippert solicited and accepted kickbacks from a transportation company which was a subcontractor on the CCC contracts. The indictment also charged that from October 1988 to May 1992, Lippert included the kickbacks in the contract price charged by C.B. Forms L.P. to CCC.

Snead said that Lippert allegedly accepted kickbacks totaling about $176,400. Approximately $140,100 of that amount went to C.B. Forms L.P. and $36,300 went to Lippert personally. Under terms of the CCC contracts, C.B. Forms L.P. was to bill CCC for the actual cost of shipping. Lippert allegedly received kickbacks from the transportation company of between 25 and 55 cents on every dollar the printing company claimed to have paid.

According to Snead, C.B. Forms L.P. has been a major supplier of printed material to CCC since at least the early 1980s. This company has been the successful bidder on several different printing contracts for printed forms used in various agriculture programs.

Snead said that as a result of the six month investigation, $104,500 in alleged additional kickbacks which Lippert was to have received were not paid. CCC is currently withholding approximately $136,000 in payments to the printing company.

The investigation was coordinated with Stephen Higgins, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri. The maximum penalty on each charge is 10 years in prison and a fine not to exceed $250,000.

CCC is a wholly owned federal corporation within USDA. CCC functions as the financial institution through which all money transactions are handled for farm and income support.

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USDA ANNOUNCES 1992/93 EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PACKAGE FOR FROZEN POULTRY

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced a multi-country package of initiatives under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program to boost sales of 58,000 metric tons of U.S. frozen poultry, effective immediately.

The new package of frozen poultry initiatives to five countries or regions replaces all EEP frozen poultry initiatives announced previously. The new initiatives will remain in effect through Dec. 31, 1993. Additional destinations or quantities may be added later.

Frozen poultry sales under EEP in fiscal 1992 were nearly 26,000 metric tons.

"This package allows U.S. producers and exporters to compete against highly subsidized poultry exports from the European Community," Madigan said. "It allows U.S. exporters to sell U.S. poultry at competitive prices and build our trade in these targeted markets."

"Today's announcement also underscores USDA's commitment to use the Export Enhancement Program to continue to build markets for U.S. value-added products," he said.

He said that "bundling" of frozen poultry initiatives also will help avert sales disruptions, give farmers, exporters and foreign buyers greater certainty on sales and make the United States a more reliable supplier.

The package of initiatives announced today, in metric tons, includes:

COUNTRY OR REGION	METRIC TONS
Saudi Arabia	10,000
Gulf States (5)	10,000
Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates	
Jordan	10,000
Singapore	3,000
Egypt	25,000
Total	58,000

Sales of frozen poultry will be made to buyers in all countries announced today through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. The export sales will be facilitated with cash bonus payments. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in these markets.

EEP invitations for each of the countries will be issued immediately. For more information, call Janet M. Kavan, (202) 720-5540, or L.T. McElvain, (202) 720-6211.

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